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ABSTRACT

A brochure provides a checklist highlighting the important questions and activities that should be addressed and undertaken as part of a school safety and preparedness program for earthquakes. It reminds administrators and other interested parties on what not to forget in preparing schools for earthquakes, such as staff knowledge needs, evacuation planning, nonstructural hazards to be addressed, communication system needs, and vital records protection. Also listed are emergency response actions to remember. The brochure also contains a legislative checklist of what public school administration need to do to in their schools earthquake preparedness to make sure they comply with all the provisions of state legislation. (GR)

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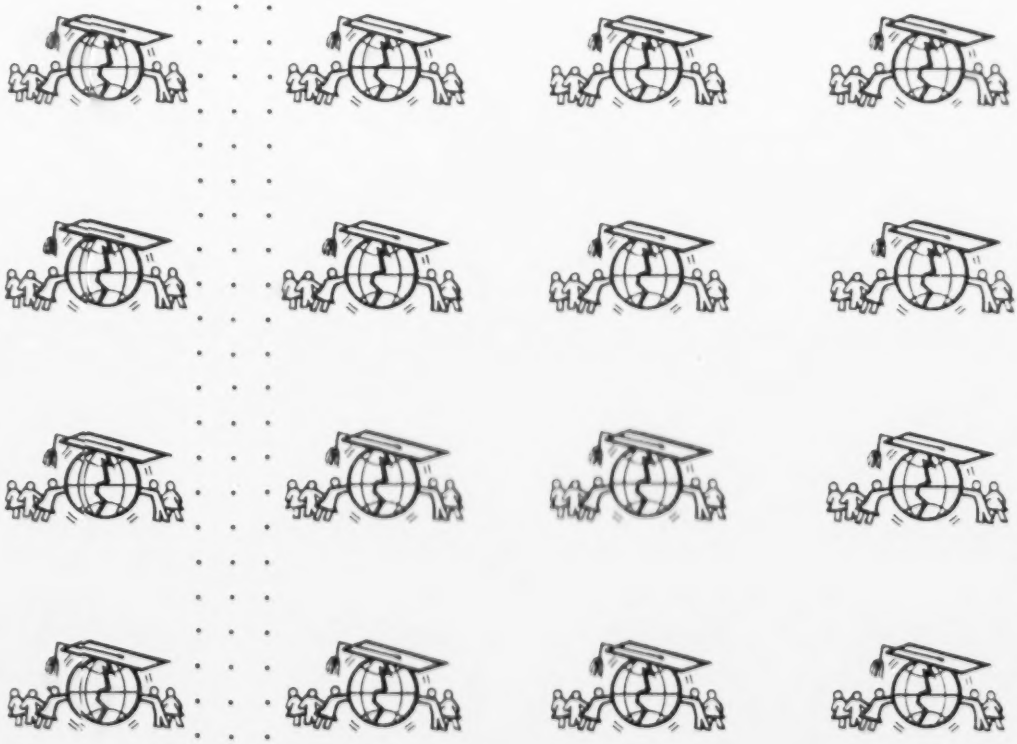
EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOLS



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Experts point to the certainty of damaging earthquakes in California. Such an event may occcur without warning and may occur during school hours. Such a disaster would also cause widespread damage and secondary hazards (ground failure, fire, flooding), which may disable transportation, communication, and lifeline systems. Therefore, school communities need to be prepared and self-sufficient, capable of relying on their own resources to protect and care for the school population until outside assistance is available. The purpose of this brochure is to highlight important questions and activities that should be addressed and undertaken as part of a school safety and preparedness program.

Preparedness and Mitigation

- Does your school have a disaster plan, and is your staff aware of their roles and responsibilities under the plan? Do they realize that they may be responsible for the students for up to 72 hours after a disaster occurs?
- Is your staff aware of the fact that, under Government Code #3100, they are Disaster Service Workers, and if the disaster occurs during school hours, they may be required to remain at school?
- Does your staff know the location of the main gas, electricity and water shut-off valves? Who has been trained to check for damage and turn them off if the need arises?
- Has a map of the school and school grounds been made and distributed to all staff members which includes basic evacuation procedures and potential earthquake hazards to avoid?
- Have you made a list and a map of the location and availability of First Aid and other emergency supplies?
- What nonstructural hazard mitigation measures have been completed at your school:
  - Have bookshelves, file cabinets, and free-standing cupboards been bolted to the wall or arranged to support each other?
  - Have heavy items been removed from the tops of bookshelves and cupboards?
  - Have the windows in the classrooms and other campus buildings been equipped with safety glass or covered with protective film?
  - Are the partitions, ceilings, overhead lights, and air ducts secured to the structure of the building?
- Have inventories been made of hazardous chemicals in areas such as the science building and maintenance shops? Has anyone been appointed to check on these chemicals after an earthquake?
- Have you conducted an inventory of the kinds of skills or needs of your staff? Have you conducted training in first aid, damage assessment, and fire suppression?

- Does the school have any arrangements with structural engineers or local contractors who will report to the school directly after a disaster to determine the damage and the need to evacuate?
- Do you know if your school has been designated as a potential mass care shelter? Has your staff been trained in managing such a shelter?
- Does your school have a back-up communications system such as a CB radio, ham operator, or two-way radio to communicate with your local emergency operations center? Who is trained to use this equipment?
- Does your school have an internal communication system, such as walkie talkies, megaphones, etc.?
- Is there an earthquake preparedness program in your curriculum?
- Are there any programs established between the school and parent groups which discuss the school's policies regarding student release and retention and the development of an emergency plan for the home?
- How and where are you storing vital data and records? Do you have duplicate copies of important data stored in an off-site location?

Emergency Response

- Has a central "command post" or other central planning area been identified, which contains maps of the campus, facilities, and hazards in the area, an enrollment sheet for the current year, First Aid supplies, and other tools necessary to manage the emergency response activities after a disaster?
- Do the teachers have basic operating procedures to follow such as:
  - Knowing how to implement the basic "duck and cover" actions when an earthquake begins?
  - Having an emergency kit near the desk which contains an attendance sheet, special medical information, and student release information?
  - When to evacuate, and when to remain in the classroom after an earthquake?
  - Knowing how to determine the most seriously injured (triage), to administer First Aid and to comfort those who are frightened or hysterical?
  - If some students are seriously injured and an evacuation is in order, what to do with the injured?

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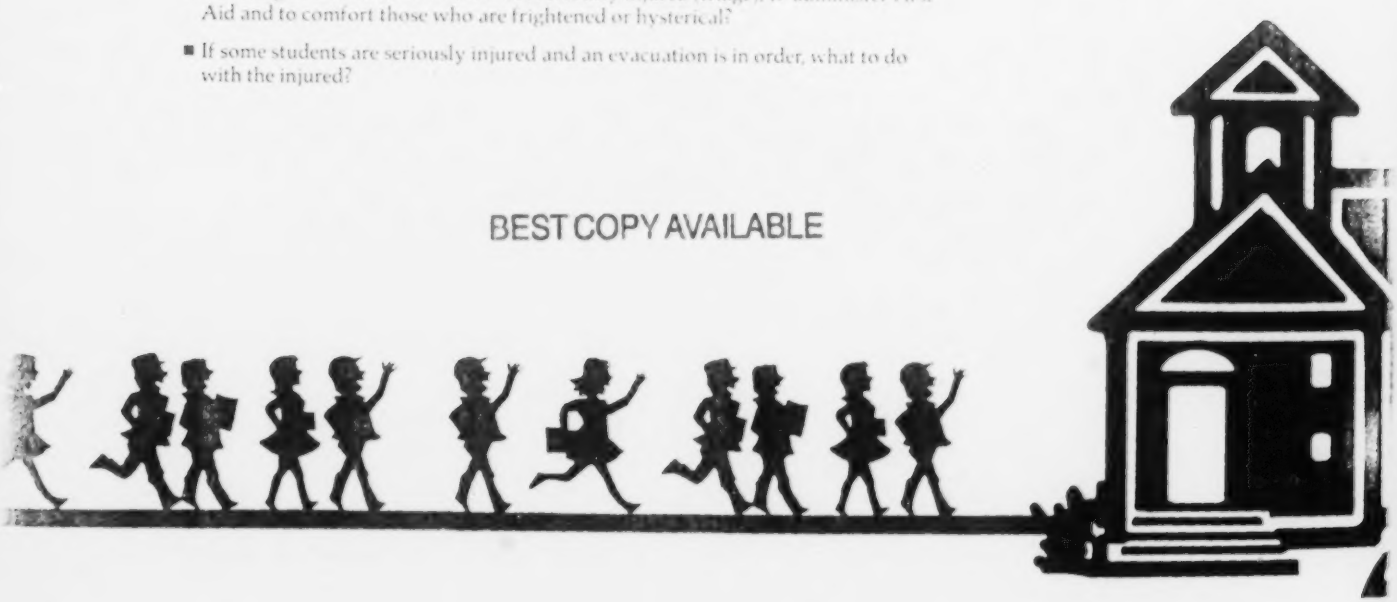

Assembly Bill 2786: Katz at a Glance (Education Code 35295, 35296, 35297)

Recognizing that California will experience moderate to severe earthquakes in the foreseeable future, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed Assembly Bill 2786 (Katz, 1984) to minimize loss of life and disruption during an earthquake and assure that school students and staff act instinctively and correctly when an earthquake strikes.

AB 2786 applies to the governing boards of public and/or private elementary and high schools that have school buildings with over 50 students or more than one classroom, and to all county school superintendents. Under AB 2786 you are required to establish an earthquake emergency system at your facility.

Use the following quick checklist to assess whether or not your "earthquake emergency system" is in compliance with all of the provisions of AB 2786.

Develop a school building disaster plan to maintain the safety and care of students and staff. The plan should outline roles, responsibilities and procedures for students and staff and should be ready for implementation at all times.

Conduct periodic drills in a "drop and cover" procedure to train students and staff to cover in an earthquake under a table or a desk, dropping to his or her knees with the head protected by the arms and the back to the windows. Drop and cover drills should be held once a quarter in elementary schools and once a semester in secondary schools. School administrators should document these drills similar to the procedures used for recording fire drills.

Take preparedness and mitigation measures to ensure the safety of your students, staff and school facility before, during and after an earthquake.

Provide educational programs to ensure that students and staff are aware of, and properly trained to follow the procedures of the earthquake emergency system.

Be prepared to have your school serve as a possible public shelter for the community during disasters or emergencies. This may necessitate training your staff in shelter management. (Education Code 40041.5, 40042)

The enforcement of the provisions of the Katz Bill is the responsibility of all local districts.

No appropriation is made to reimburse schools and school districts for costs incurred in carrying out these programs, but local agencies or school districts may pursue reimbursement under Chapter 3, Part 4, Division 1 of the Revenue and Taxation Code.

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For specific information on developing a preparedness program for your school, refer to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's, (FEMA) **Guidebook for Developing a School Safety Program.** Copies of this material have been mailed out to every public and private school principal, district and county Office of the Superintendent of Schools. For assistance, contact your local school district or the county Office of Education. In addition, the following organizations may provide assistance and resources to schools in developing an earthquake emergency program:

Southern California Earthquake Preparedness Project, (SCEPP)
600 South Commonwealth Avenue, Suite 1100
Los Angeles, California 90005
213/739-6695

QUAKESAFE Resource Center for School Earthquake Preparedness
10680 W. Pico Boulevard, Suite 410
Los Angeles, California 90064
213/559-5176

Office of Emergency Services
(check your local office)

California Earthquake Education Project, (CALEEP)
Lawrence Hall of Science
University of California Berkeley
Berkeley, California 94207
415/642-8718

Environmental Volunteers
2253 Park Boulevard
Palo Alto, California 94306
415/327-6017

American Red Cross
(check your local chapter office)

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The recommendations and suggestions included in this document are intended to improve earthquake preparedness; however, they do not guarantee the safety of any individual, structure, or facility. Neither the United States nor the State of California assumes liability for any injury, death or property damage which occurs in connection with an earthquake.

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